

- A three -year commitment is mandatory for this CBP Canine Officer position. -

Initially the 0436 Series was developed for positions in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Program only and other agencies were not allowed to place positions in this series without the approval of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). However, since this position description (PD) describes the work transitioned from APHIS, PPQ into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), it may be utilized for recruitment purposes until such time new position descriptions are established for DHS, CBP.

Introduction:

The incumbent serves as a Customs and Border Protection Agriculture Canine Enforcement Officer at ports of entry with the responsibility for enforcing Federal laws including APHIS regulations. The Officer works under the supervision of a Customs and Border Protection Supervisor and works with relative independence in carrying out assigned duties and responsibilities. The Regional Canine Program Coordinator will oversee reports and training until such time that the DHS transition is completed.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The incumbent serves as a Customs and Border Protection Officer at a port with the responsibility for enforcing federal regulations and laws but more specifically USDA- APHIS regulations.

More specifically, the incumbent:

Following standard Customs and Border Protection Agriculture procedures, inspects ships, aircraft, vehicles, passengers, railway cars, mail baggage, plants, plant products, and miscellaneous articles for restricted or prohibited agricultural commodities, animal byproducts, and pests that may be dangerous to the nation's agriculture.

Reviews manifests, incoming forms, consular invoices and other documents associated with the import of products, noting agricultural commodities on an inspection report based on the country of origin, type of commodity, pest risk, and the like. Selects material for inspection according to established sampling plan. Using field techniques recognizes the presence and/or symptoms of plant pests. Distinguishes between domestic and cosmopolitan pests and those that are potentially dangerous to the agricultural industry. From the results of inspections, makes decisions as to the subsequent action such as: 1) release of non-prohibited products and materials, 2) determines the need for pre-entry treatments, and 3) refuses entry movement and or seize, destroy, or safeguard prohibited, restrictive, or infested materials pending final disposition.

Contacts landowners, farmers, nurserymen, warehousemen, trade representatives, brokers, and the like relative to enforcing quarantine regulations.

Coordinates and conducts surveys and inspection to determine the presence and density of plant pests and other environmental, physical, biological, and ecological factors that may affect the injurious nature of plant pests.

Interprets and enforces Federal and parallel State domestic quarantines and regulatory orders restricting the shipment of plants, plant products, animal byproducts, and other materials; into, within, and out of the United States. Upon compliance with regulations issues certificates or permits the movement of regulated articles. Prepares and executes compliance agreements with cooperators, catering devices, establishments, and the like. Review and revises cooperative agreements as conditions warrant.

Plans, conducts, and/or supervises various treatments such as disinfection, sterilization, fumigation, and the like of plant pests. Determines and ensures that the proper dosage, time of exposure, temperature, and safety conditions are met to avoid damage to the products.

Determines the appropriate measures to use to eradicate the pests. Decides when re-inspection of infested sites shall be made to determine the incidence or density of plant pests and the effect of control operations.

The CBP Canine Officer Duties include:

Cares for and handles detector dog at ports of entry in handling incoming international traffic. Uses various forms of information to determine potential high-risk entries and directs dog to it. The canine identifies conveyances/passengers that may contain prohibited agricultural items.

With use of canine, inspects carriers or conveyances to identify possible prohibited agricultural items.

Keeps daily record of inspection activities, cost effectiveness, canine health and behavior and canine proficiency. This information is translated into a monthly report.

Quickly detects any deviation in a dog's behavior and is able to correlate it with the dog's productivity. Officer must be sensitive to a dog's health and is able to detect signs of illness in order to get immediate medical attention, if necessary. Maintains good animal welfare standards including the proper health program, environment, diet and housing.

Conducts continuing training program for canine. Exercises dog off job and cares for general well being of dog on and off the job.

Develops and conducts training program for Port of Entry employees to make them aware of agricultural quarantine programs and skilled at making referrals of containers containing agricultural products.

Majority of incumbent's time is spent working directly with their dog in one of four work situations: Border Operations, International Mail Operations, Airport Operations or Cargo Operations (which also can include international mail operations).

CBP Canine Officers are involved in media and public events. Communicate to schools, public groups, and/or parties requesting information on the canine programs.

This position requires the completion of a one-year probationary period. Satisfactory completion of the probationary period includes:

Achieving a grade of 80 percent for New Officer Training (NOT) in each major area.

Passing Canine Training in Orlando, FL.

Factor Levels

1. Knowledge required by the Position

Knowledge of biological and agricultural science and of Plant Protection and Quarantine programs, activities, and regulations sufficient to independently apply established methods and procedures in the performance of survey, control, and regulatory work, and generally recognizes plant pests of economic significance.

Knowledge of canine behavior and techniques used in training canine in order to maintain proficiency of the dog.

Required recognizing various canine diseases sufficiently to determine level of medical care required.

Knowledge of canine care and behavior in order to train canine, handle dog in inspection activities and ensure humane treatment and well being of dog.

Knowledge of farming operations, crops, and characteristics of parasitic plant pests (including insects and other plants) sufficient to effectively plan and oversee a control program in a designated geographical area.

Knowledge of substances such as fumigants, herbicides, pesticides, and the equipment associated with these substances sufficient to use them safely and effectively in plant protection and quarantine activities.

Knowledge of various treatment methods such as refrigeration, vapor heat, and dry heat sufficient to independently use these methods or to evaluate the effectiveness of the application of such methods in carrying out treatment and control activities.

Knowledge of the transportation and shipping industry's practices, procedures and carrier modes sufficient to enforce quarantines governing movement of injurious plant pests, diseases, and animal byproducts and to inspect various conveyances.

2. Supervisory Controls

The supervisor assigns the Inspector to a particular designated work area or project and provides special instructions on changes in policies or procedures. The inspector works relatively independent in carrying out assigned duties and responsibilities. Actions and decisions are generally made within the timeframe of applicable guides and precedents. Considerable independent judgment is exercised in the case of an adverse decision which would result in a large unexpected expense or loss. Potentially controversial decisions are referred to the supervisor for concurrence. Work is reviewed through formal or informal reports, discussions of actions taken, or through occasional observation of actual work performance. The work is reviewed for adequacy of results and adherence to established policies and procedures.

3. Guidelines

Guides include agency regulations, directives, Manuals, treatment instructions, and other administrative guidelines. The guides do not cover all problems, situations, or circumstances encountered. The Inspector must use experience and judgment in applying the guides when taking the necessary actions to prevent the introduction of plant pests or solving problems in surveying or regulatory work.

4. Complexity

Assignments involve the inspection of cargo, baggage, railway cars, and aircraft. ships, plants, plant material, animal byproducts and planning and conducting pest detection surveys to enforce regulations governing the movement of plant pests and field operation designed to control, suppress, or eradicate plant pests. For inspection assignments the inspector considers such factors as the country of origin, the type of pest normally associated with a commodity, and the destination of the material and its end use. In planning various survey and regulatory operations, the inspector considers such factors as resources available, degree of infestation, changing patterns of infestation, hazard of spread, and crops. Actions are generally made within the framework applicable guides and precedents. Problems are usually traditional in nature and complex situations are referred to the supervisor for solutions.

5. Scope and Effect

The purpose of the work is to enforce regulations in accordance with established criteria, various regulations which govern the movement of prohibited, restricted, and unrestricted plants, plant material, and animal byproducts and which are designed to prevent the spread of foreign pests and diseases. The work contributes to the health and marketability of agricultural and animal resources and to the public's understanding of the need for, and voluntary compliance with, agricultural and other quarantines. Additionally, farmers, ranchers, and other members of the public are protected against the effects of destructive insects, diseases, and weeds.

6. Personal Contacts

Personal contacts are with business and personal travelers including persons of various nationalities, socioeconomic groups, and professional levels; e.g., diplomats, clerks, nonresidents with no English speaking capability, officers of Federal and State enforcement agencies, importers and exporters, nursery personnel, contractors, employees of transportation and shipping companies. These may take place in diverse places such as a ship's engine room, store room, or bridge; on board aircraft at international borders, or in warehouses.

7. Purpose of Contacts

The contacts are to enforce federal regulations; to explain methods, procedures, and objectives including Customs Border Protection Agriculture Inspection programs; obtain voluntary cooperation of the interested parties; and to search for and locate plant pests. Usually the people with whom the inspector interacts are cooperative (or at least neutral in their attitude). Occasionally the inspector is called upon to use tact and persuasion to overcome the resistance of persons who are reluctant to cooperate for various reasons; e.g., fear of property confiscation or situations that develop because of misunderstanding due to personality conflicts.

8. Physical Demands

The work requires some physical exertion such as long periods of standing at passenger inspection counters or lengthy microscopy sessions, recurring walking, crouching, stooping and climbing heights (e.g., palletized cargo, ship ladders, buildings, etc.) driving heavy vehicles for extended periods of time. Dexterity and physical coordination are required in order to handle animal (detector dog) on a regular basis. Work environment includes high risks and subjection to possible dangerous situations or unusual environmental stress such as walking on dangerous, oily dangerous, harmful substances (toxic chemicals); and vehicle exhaust fumes. Canine officer should be able to lift 75-100 pounds. Canine Officers are required to lift their dogs in various inspection activities.

9. Work Environment

This position requires the incumbent to pass the appropriate security clearance as a condition of employment. Work schedules may require more than 40 hours per week, night and/or weekend assignments and holiday work. The work involves such tasks as working around farms, railroad yards, aircraft cargo areas and docks, in some of these areas, protective clothing such as hard hats must be worn. The employee also works around poisons and toxic fumigants and may wear protective clothing such as masks and goggles.